

Division for the Visually Impaired
Unified English Braille Plan
Public Meeting Minutes
Milford State Service Center Annex
13 SW Front St.
Milford, DE 19963
May 29, 2018 5:00pm

Attendees:

Erin Weaver, Division for the Visually Impaired, Matthew Tseronis, Division for the Visually Impaired, Holly Jackson, Division for the Visually Impaired, Elisha Jenkins, Division for the Visually Impaired, Sara Nehra, Spanish Interpreter Pamela D'Occhio, Sign Language Interpreter, Gloria D'Amore, Court Reporter, Tracy Neugebauer, Department of Education, Lloyd Schmitz, Public.

Historical Provision of Braille Materials and Preparation

In 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) adopted Unified English Braille (UEB) as an official braille code to replace English Braille American Edition (EBAE) in the United States. The implementation date for UEB in the United States as established by BANA was January 4, 2016. BANA developed an implementation timeline that includes four phases. BANA's implementation plan is as follows:

- 2013 Information Year: Development and dissemination of UEB information and gathering of constituent input
- 2014 Infrastructure Year: Procurement and production of UEB braille materials and development of training materials
- 2015 Instructional Year: Readers, producers and educators will become proficient in UEB
- 2016 Implementation Year: All new transcriptions will be produced in UEB. Educators will teach the UEB code. Devices and software will fully and accurately incorporate UEB

Unified English Braille (UEB) Defined

Unified English Braille (UEB) is the revised braille code used internationally for transcribing braille in the English language. UEB is based on the previous international literary braille code, English Braille American Edition (EBAE), with the same alphabet and most of the same contractions and punctuation. UEB is a

complete braille code encompassing revisions and extensions to EBAE that include symbols for technical materials (e.g. science, technology, engineering and mathematics). UEB is designed to be less ambiguous, with fewer exceptions and rules. Literary materials transcribed in UEB are easily read by most braille readers who are familiar with EBAE. Currently, UEB is an official braille code in eight English-speaking countries, including the United States.

Unified English Braille 2014-Present

School Year 2014/15- Procurement and production of UEB Braille materials and development of training materials

School Year 2015/16-

- Production team trained in UEB literary braille
- State Assessments were produced in EBAE and Nemeth

School Year 2016/17-

- All new transcriptions were produced in UEB
- Production team were certified in literary UEB
- Educator professional development in the UEB code
- Devices and software fully incorporated UEB
- Statewide assessments were produced in EBAE and Nemeth
- Students introduced to UEB
- UEB literary materials provided for students whose Individualized Education Program specifically designated UEB

School Year 2017/18-

- Materials produced in UEB Literary and Nemeth Math
- UEB Math materials produced for students whose Individualized Education Program specifically designating UEB
- Statewide Assessments were produced in UEB literary and Nemeth unless designated on student's IEP for UEB Math
- Production team received professional development on accessible document creation and remediation
- Educators received professional development on UEB Math and Technical, accessible notetakers, and braille translation software tools
- Students continued to be introduced and instructed in literary and math UEB

UEB Plan Highlights/ Timeline

Producers/Creators/Transcribers are certified in UEB. Some are also certified in Nemeth and Music braille as needed for individual students.

Students are progressing well with the transition to UEB.

The type of braille used by students is determined by their IEP. Resources will be posted on DVI website under Publications/Forms

Resources will be added to DVI Resource Guide as well.

The UEB transition process will occur gradually over several years, with the anticipated completion of the full transition to UEB for braille instruction and the transcription of instructional materials and statewide assessments by the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Throughout the transition period, some instructional materials and statewide assessment will continue to be available in EBAE and Nemeth Code to address individual student needs, as determined appropriate by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team.

School Year 2018-19:

- Materials produced in UEB Literary and Nemeth Math
- UEB Math materials will be produced for students whose Individualized Education Program specifically designate UEB
- Statewide Assessments will be produced in UEB literary and Nemeth unless designated on student's IEP for UEB Math
- Production team will continue to receive professional development on accessible document creation and remediation
- Educators will receive professional development on UEB Math and Technical
- Students will be receive UEB Math instruction
- Students will be introduced to UEB science and technical subjects

School Year 2019-20:

- Materials produced in UEB literary, Math and technical
- Statewide Assessments will be produced in UEB literary, math, and technical
- Students will be receive UEB science and technical instruction

Public Comments:

Lloyd Schmitz: What type of training did the staff have to prepare for UEB?

Response: A two-day professional development day on UEB was held in June of 2017.

Lloyd Schmitz asked if there would be annual UEB training for new staff at DVI and in the districts. Response: UEB professional development resources are available for new hires including virtual resources.